Outcome of Italy visit

43. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the outcome of his recent visit to Itlay;

(b) whether a long term stable relationship could be established; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) The visit provided an opportunity for wide-ranging discussions on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest and contemporary relevance. The discussions led to an enhanced understanding of India's concerns on various issues, including on developments in the neighbourhood, cross border and international terrorism, drug trafficking disarmament and security related issues. India and Itlay have established a long-standing relationship for mutually beneficial cooperation in several areas. The two countries have institutionalised periodic political consultations and economic and trade cooperation through a Joint Economic Commission.

Outcome of talks with US Deputy Secretary of State

44. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any understanding has been reached at the last round of discussions between him and the US Deputy Secretary of State; and

(b) if not, the areas of differences, if any?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The last meeting with the Deputy Secretary of State of the United States, Mr. Strobe Talbott, took place in London on January 18-19, 2000. The talks were

conducted in a positive and constructive manner. The ongoing dialogue on security, non-proliferation, disarmament and related issues was continued. Regional developments, counter-terrorism and the visit of President Clinton to India were also discussed.

The two sides agreed to establish a Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism. They also agreed to work together to ensure that the perpetrators of the hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight IC-814 were brought to justice, as part of joint efforts to combat international terrorism. Both sides agreed on the need to intensify and broaden Indo-American discussions with the goal of crafting a multi-facted partnership and, to this end, agreed to continue with the ongoing dialogue.

ISI'S anti-India Operations from Nepal

45. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had furnished sufficient evidence to the Nepalese Government about the ISI's anti-India operations from Nepal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the response received from the Government of Nepal in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The Government of India have discussed from time to time with the Government of Nepal our concerns about the ISI misusing the Nepalese territory and the open India-Nepal border for activities inimical to India's interest. Reports received by the Government indicate increasing evidence of ISI using Nepal as a staging post for terrorist activities directed against India and the Nepalese Government have been sensitised on this issue.

(c) The Government of Nepal have assured that their territory would not be used for activities inimical to India's interest and have been extending their cooperation to the Government of India in this